

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau of Justice Statistics

2004 National Prisoner Survey of Sexual Assault

AGENCY: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice

ACTION: Notice of Solicitation

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to announce a public solicitation to obtain a collection agent through a Cooperative Agreement to develop, design, and field test a survey instrument for the National Prisoner Survey of Sexual Assault (NPS-SA) and to prepare an implementation plan for fielding the NPS-SA in 2005.

DATES: Proposals must be received at the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) by November 5, 2003, to be eligible for consideration.

CLARIFICATIONS:

As of October 7, 2003; 20-Page Limit and Appendices

The purpose of this notice is to clarify language contained in the FY04 BJS NPS-SA solicitation posted on September 11, 2003. Under "Evaluation Criteria," applicants are instructed that the Project Narrative, including the proposal, detailed budget, and a description of key staff, shall not exceed 20 pages.

As a clarification, the 20-page limit shall include the proposal, a 1-2 page budget summary, and a brief description of key staff. The fully detailed budget and resumés for key staff may be included as attachments to the Project Narrative and shall not count against the 20-page limit.

As of October 21, 2003; Extension of Deadline for Submission of Proposals

The deadline for submitting proposals for this solicitation has been moved from October 22, 2003 to November 5, 2003. All application materials must be submitted through the Grant Management System no later than 8:00pm (EST) on November 5, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) now requires that funding applications be submitted through the OJP Grant Management System (GMS). Using an established Internet account, go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Timothy Hughes, Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 810 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20531; phone (202) 305-9014; email: hughesti@ojp.usdoj.gov or Allen Beck, Chief of Corrections Statistics; phone (202) 616-3277; email: becka@ojp.usdoj.gov

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 3732; 42 USC 3711; and P.L. 108-79

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Program Goals

The purpose of this award is to provide funding for a collection agent to design, develop, and field test a survey instrument for the National Prisoner Survey of Sexual Assault (NPS-SA) and to prepare a national implementation plan for fielding the NPS-SA in 2005. The NPS-SA will consist of an Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interview (ACASI) instrument administered to inmates in correctional facilities. BJS anticipates making one award, not to exceed \$3 million, for a 24-month period under this solicitation.

This survey is part of the National Prison Rape Statistics program (NPRS), a recurring survey series which will collect and analyze data on the incidence of sexual assault among individuals held in Federal and State prisons, local jails, and juvenile facilities as well as former inmates. The NPRS is being developed for implementation upon passage of The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (S. 1435/H.R. 1707). The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice is statutorily authorized to collect, compile, analyze, publish, and disseminate uniform national statistics concerning all aspects of criminal justice and related components of the criminal justice system. BJS is responsible for collecting data for the NPRS. Findings from the NPRS will be used to develop and implement national standards for the detection, prevention, and reduction of sexual assault within correctional facilities.

At present, there is no reliable collection methodology for measuring prison rape. The major reason for the absence of reliable estimates of the incidence and prevalence of prison rape is the inherent difficulty of collecting such sensitive data. Most prior attempts to measure the prevalence of prison rape have utilized either personal interviews of inmates or self-administered inmate questionnaires. Serious problems are inherent in the use of either of these methods to measure prison rape in terms of both reporting and facility coverage. Personal interviews of inmates have generally yielded very low positive response rates (most are below 1%). These low rates of reporting make it impossible to perform further analysis of victim, offender, and facility characteristics. More recent studies have utilized self-administered questionnaires, which have yielded higher sexual coercion rates (around 20% ever while incarcerated). However, questions about the reliability of such studies remain due to low questionnaire completion rates (70-75% of questionnaires were not returned), and the loss of control over who fills out the form and under what conditions within the facility.

BJS has repeatedly encountered problems collecting inmate self-reports of sexual assault in past inmate surveys. In fact, some inmates are so reluctant to speak about the topic that it not only prevents collection of that information, but also negatively affects participation in the remainder of the questionnaire.

To address these methodological problems, BJS proposes development of an ACASI instrument to measure incidents of prison rape in correctional facilities. This effort would focus on the use of ACASI technology to improve reliability. The ACASI format would involve inmates responding to a computer questionnaire, following audio instructions delivered via headphones. It is anticipated that, by removing the presence of a personal interviewer, this methodology will increase an inmate's willingness to report sensitive information. At the same time, the conditions under which inmates complete the ACASI survey can be controlled, unlike current methods that allow inmates to complete a self-administered questionnaire whenever and wherever they choose.

Eligibility Requirements

Both profit making and nonprofit organizations may apply for funds. Consistent with OJP fiscal requirements, however, no fees may be charged against the project by profit-making organizations.

Scope of Work

The objectives of this project are to (1) develop ACASI methods and an instrument for the NPS-SA tailored for

use by Federal prisoners, State prisoners and local jail inmates; (2) explore legal and ethical considerations related to the collection of such sensitive data from a 10% sample of the more than 8,000 correctional facilities; (3) explore alternative sampling methodologies for producing reliable facility-level estimates; (4) develop procedures that minimize collection costs and potential disruption of facility operations; (5) develop methods and statistical models for assessing the reliability of inmate self-reports; (6) conduct a field test of the ACASI instrument in a sample of facilities within the Federal Bureau of Prisons, State prisons and local jails; and (7) provide an implementation plan for the national data collection to begin in 2005.

Specifically, the Recipient of funds will:

1. Develop a detailed timetable for each task in the project. The field test of the ACASI instrument should begin within approximately 12 months of the project start and be completed within 24 months. All deliverables are due within 24 months. After the BJS Project Manager (PM) has agreed to the timetable, all work must be completed as scheduled.
2. Design and develop an ACASI instrument for the NPS-SA. The Recipient shall develop the instrument in collaboration with the PM. The ACASI instrument shall be developed in English and Spanish. The instrument must maximize respondent cooperation and confidentiality, be easily understood by a respondent with a 6th grade education, and not exceed an average respondent burden of 30 minutes. The instrument shall be tailored for use by inmates in both prison and jail facilities.

The instrument shall be created from non-proprietary software commonly available to Government and Industry, in compliance with the Government's desire for portability in applications. BJS retains all rights to the source code used to produce the instrument. Authoring software must be capable of producing a hard copy version of the ACASI interview instrument and the associated audio files for purposes of explaining to the PM, BJS staff, and to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) exactly how the ACASI instrument is being implemented. The Recipient shall make available to the PM a draft version of the ACASI instrument (installed in a field laptop) for evaluation within 12 months of the project start.

3. Conduct a methodological field test of the ACASI instrument in a sample of facilities. The PM shall provide to the Recipient a list of facilities to be used in the field test. The Recipient shall assist the PM in securing cooperation and coordination with each facility. The Recipient shall coordinate with each facility to ensure that all field staff comply with all facility regulations. The Recipient shall be responsible for all subsequent logistics related to field test activities.

The field test shall include:

Within approximately 12 months of the project start, a cognitive test of the ACASI instrument shall occur in 6 facilities: 2 Federal prisons, 2 State prisons, and 2 local jails. Two days of testing shall occur at each facility. Within approximately 1 month upon completion of the cognitive test, the Recipient shall provide to the PM an item-specific analysis of the instrument. The analysis should address the comprehension of the items by inmates as well as the perceived reliability of the instrument as pertaining to the goals of the survey. The Recipient shall work in collaboration with the PM to revise the instrument as necessary.

Within approximately 16 months of the project start, a field test of the ACASI instrument shall occur in 25 facilities: 5 Federal prisons, 10 State prisons, and 10 local jails. Up to 100 inmates shall be sampled from each facility. Within 2 months upon completion of the field test, the Recipient shall

provide to the PM a full electronic data file which has been appropriately cleaned and weighted. The Recipient shall also provide to the PM a written report consisting of an analysis of all aspects of the survey administration including: case management, training of field staff, facility coordination, respondent cooperation, and other details related to the full field management of the survey.

4. The Recipient shall, in collaboration with the PM, modify the ACASI instrument utilizing results from the field test to produce a final instrument for use in the 2005 NPS-SA.

5. Deliver to BJS electronic versions of the field test data in both raw and final forms, documentation, and the final instrument on diskette and in ASCII file format. Field test documentation should include, but is not limited to, a comprehensive codebook detailing variable positions, data coding, variable and value labels, any recoding implemented during the data cleaning process, methods used for dealing with missing data, any data allocations, weights, imputation, or non-response adjustment, and copies of all program code used to generate data or published statistics. All data and source code generated by this project belong to BJS. Publication, presentation, or dissemination of the data in any form, prior to official release by BJS, is prohibited. All data and documentation from this survey may be posted on the BJS Web site, and data archived at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

6. Develop a plan for the national implementation of the 2005 NPS-SA in collaboration with the PM. The national implementation plan must address all aspects of the data collection including, but not limited to:

- selection of respondents from the entire Federal and State prison and local jail population including all inmates (segregated, death-row, high-risk, super-maximum-security, and other non-general population inmates)
- characteristics unique to local jail inmates who have much shorter lengths of stay relative to Federal and State prisoners
- sample design and facility selection
- contact procedures for selected facilities
- protocols for coordinating the data collection within sampled facilities
- techniques for obtaining high rates of participation by sampled facilities
- respondent selection and sampling procedures within sampled facilities
- techniques for obtaining high rates of cooperation from sampled respondents
- case management
- steps to ensure data and respondent confidentiality
- a methodology to address item and unit non-response, post-survey weighting specifications to produce facility and national-level estimates, and standard errors.

7. Meetings and Progress Reports - Formal meetings between the PM and the Recipient will be scheduled as needed. Such meetings shall take place at a location mutually acceptable to both parties. Conference calls between BJS project principals and the Recipient's Project Director shall be held at least once per month.

- The Recipient shall attend up to 2 formal meetings during the development phase of the instrument. Participants shall include Recipient and BJS staff, consultants and subject matter experts selected from Federal, State and local governments and private industry. The first meeting shall be held in Washington, D.C. on December 15, 2003. The Recipient shall attend and participate in project development and assessment. The date and location for the second formal meeting has not been determined at this time.

- The Recipient shall submit to the PM quarterly progress reports including: (1) all activities performed during the quarter; (2) problems encountered and proposed or enacted solutions; (3) plans for the upcoming quarter; (4) a brief discussion of the expenditure of funds and a statement that indicates the percentage of the funds that have been expended; (5) and a statement as to whether the project will be completed in accordance with the time frame specified in the delivery schedule and within the budgeted amount.

Evaluation Criteria

The application must be submitted by November 5, 2003. Applications will be reviewed competitively with the final award decision made by the Director of BJS. The applicant will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Demonstrated knowledge of applied survey research, with an emphasis on experience using ACASI methodology, including survey construction, interview techniques, data collection, data coding, entry and verification, and the production of public use data files. This includes availability of an adequate computing environment, knowledge of standard social science data processing software, and demonstrated ability to produce SPSS readable data files for analysis and report production.
2. Demonstrated ability and experience in collecting data from incarcerated respondents or similar populations.
3. Demonstrated fiscal, management, staff, and organizational capacity to provide sound management for this project.

The Project Narrative, not to exceed 20 pages, shall include:

- a proposal including a project description describing the activities as discussed in the Scope of Work
- a project timeline for deliverables including tentative dates for major milestones
- a description of the survey methodology to be used including data collection methods and data entry, documentation, and management procedures
- a detailed budget including salaries of staff involved in the project and the portion of those salaries to be paid from the award, fringe benefits paid to each staff person, travel costs, supplies required for the project, sub-contractual agreements, and other allowable costs
- a description of key staff including a staff loading chart, by task and contract year, showing the role and number of hours (per year) committed for proposed staff; identification of proposed key personnel and their qualifications for the significant functions in this project, along with concise descriptions of the duties each will perform under the contract; and an identification by name of all key personnel with decision-making authority.

Performance Measures

To insure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, this solicitation notifies applicants that they are required to collect and report data which measures the results of the programs implemented with this grant. To ensure accountability of this data, for which OJP is responsible, performance is measured by the following outcomes:

1. Deliver the draft ACASI survey instrument and case management system within 12 months of

the project start.

2. Identify techniques to achieve a high survey response rate (80%) during administration of the pre-test.
3. Identify techniques to achieve a high item response rate (95%) during administration of the pre-test.
4. Deliver pre-test results within 2 months of completion of the pre-test.
5. Deliver the national implementation plan and the final ACASI survey instrument and case management system 24 months after the project start.

Application Requirements

All applications for funding must be submitted electronically through the Office of Justice Programs Grants Management System (GMS), under program title FY 04 BJS NPS-SA.

For assistance in using GMS, please refer to:

GMS Application Procedures Handbook, a step-by-step guide for applying online www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm . An online Application Procedures handbook is available on this page, and applicants may link directly to OJP's Grant Management System (GMS), which will provide online help screens or for technical assistance call the GMS Help Desk at 888-549-9901.

When applying for Federal funding, applicants must provide the following information:

Applicant Information

Type of applicant
Employer Identification Number (EIN)
Organizational unit
Legal jurisdiction name
Address
Contact person and phone number

Project Information

Title of project
Areas affected by project
Proposed project period of performance
Estimated funding request
Congressional District

Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Attachment #1). Justification for all costs, including the basis for computation and how budgeted items relate to project activities.

Program Narrative (Attachment #2). Full description of the expected design and implementation of the proposed program. Specific program funding announcements will provide guidance on information to be submitted.

Human Subjects Protection Certification of Compliance. Certification of compliance with Federal regulation relating to research and statistical projects to ensure the protection of human subjects against undue and unnecessary risks.

Privacy Certificate. Certification of compliance with Federal regulation relating to the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person collected for research or statistical purposes. Includes description of procedures to be followed to protect identifiable data.

Assurances. Applicants must comply with the assurances in order to receive Federal funds. It is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds to fully understand and comply with these requirements. Failure to comply may result in withholding of funds, termination of the award, or other sanctions.

Applicants must certify compliance with government-wide common rules relating to restrictions on lobbying; debarment and suspension; and maintenance of a drug-free workplace.

Certification Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirement. Applicants are required to review and check off the box on the certification form included in their online application process. This form commits the applicant to compliance with the certification requirements under 28 CFR Part 69, "New Restrictions on Lobbying," and 28 CFR Part 67, "A Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) and Government-Wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)."

Dated September 3, 2003

Lawrence A. Greenfeld,
Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics